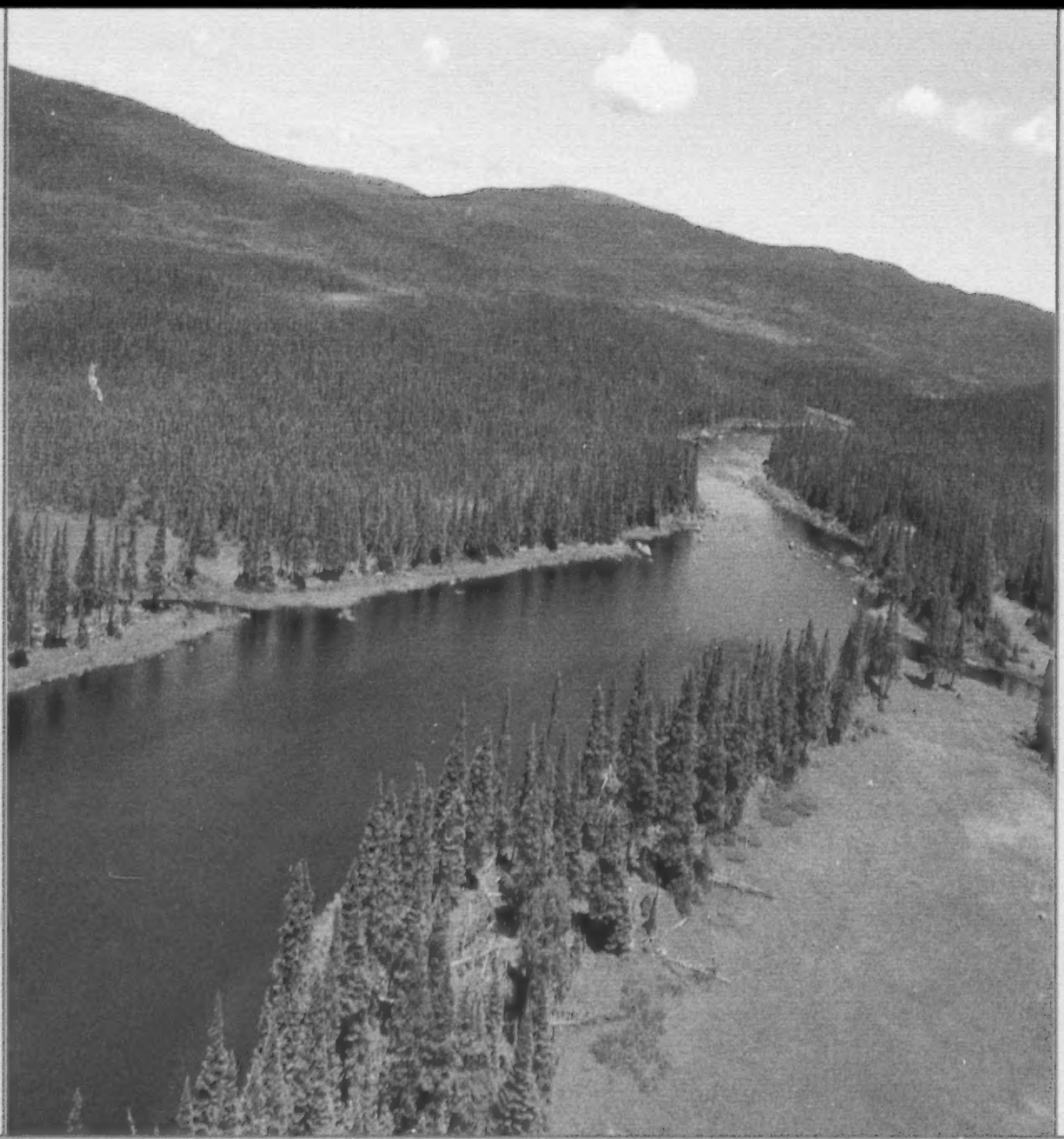

The Department of Environment and Conservation

2014-15 Annual Report

Newfoundland
Labrador

2015

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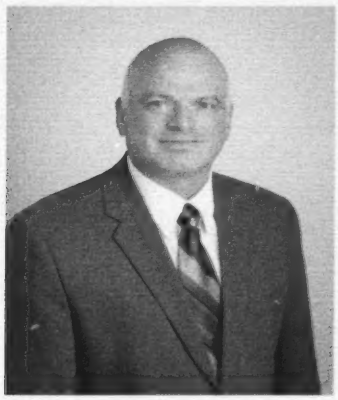
Message From the Minister



I am pleased to present the Department of Environment and Conservation's 2014- 2015 Annual Report, submitted in accordance with its requirements as a category one entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act.*

In its 2014-17 Strategic Plan, the Department identified two strategic issues: environmental protection, and natural heritage. This annual report covers the first year of the three-year planning period and provides details on the indicators and objectives for the 2014-15 fiscal year and associated progress on those initiatives.

The outcomes reported reflect the Department's commitment to the strategic directions of government. My signature is indicative of my accountability for the preparation of this report and I am accountable for the results it contains.

Hon. Dan Crummell
Minister

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Departmental Overview

The Department of Environment and Conservation is a category one entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* and is responsible for the protection and enhancement of the environment, management of the province's wildlife, inland fish, water, and parks. The Department is also the lead on sustainable development initiatives and has shared responsibility with the Office of Climate Change Energy Efficiency (CCEE) for climate change adaptation. The Department of Environment and Conservation is comprised of two branches:

Environment Branch:
This branch is responsible for the divisions of Environmental Assessment, Pollution Prevention, and Water Resources Management.

Natural Heritage Branch:
This branch is responsible for the divisions of Parks and Natural Areas, Wildlife, and the Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Science.

In addition to the above branches, the Department has a Policy and Planning Division, a Communications Division and a Sustainable Development and Strategic Sciences Division.

Mandate
The mandate of the Department of Environment and Conservation is derived from the *Department of Environment and Conservation Notice*, under the *Executive Council Act* on matters related to:

- The protection, enhancement and conservation of the quality of the natural environment including water, air and soil quality; and the conservation, development, control, improvement and proper utilization of the water resource of the province;
- The management, preservation, control, protection and development of provincial parks as defined in the *Parks Act*; provincial interests in all national parks established in the province by the Government of Canada; and wilderness and ecological reserves as defined in the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act;*
- Matters related to the management, preservation, protection and development of wildlife and inland fisheries;
- *The Wild Life Act,* in relation to wildlife reserves and Salmonier Nature Park; and
- *The Pippy Park Act* on matters related to Pippy Park.

Vision
The vision of the Department of Environment and Conservation is a clean, sustainable environment and healthy, resilient ecosystems in perpetuity for the social, physical, cultural, biological and economic well-being of the province.

Mission
By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conversation will have reduced the adverse impacts of human activities on the environment and improved the health of our ecosystems.

Departmental Overview

Lines of Business

The Department of Environment and Conservation is engaged in the following lines of business:

- Provincial parks, ecological and wilderness reserves, natural areas, and Canadian Heritage Rivers;
- Coordination of environmental assessments, sustainable development and supporting strategic environmental science;
- Management and protection of wildlife and inland fish populations;
- Protection of air and soil;
- Management of water resources, water quality, and availability; and
- Climate change adaptation.

Please refer to Appendix A for a detailed overview of the Department's current lines of business.

In October 2014 departmental restructuring signaled the movement of the Lands Branch to the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs (MIGA). Responsibility for crown lands, the Lands Branch's entities and any associated legislation were also transferred to MIGA.

Reporting Entities

Under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, a number of government entities also prepare plans and annual reports. Entities which report to the Minister include:

- Multi-Materials Stewardship Board;
- C.A. Pippy Park Commission;
- Species Status Advisory Committee; and
- Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council;

Legislation

The Department's work is informed by the following Acts and their corresponding regulations:

Environmental Protection Act
Water Resources Act
Wild Life Act
Provincial Parks Act
Endangered Species Act
National Parks Lands Act
Pippy Park Commission Act
Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act

Service NL administers certain aspects of enforcement under the *Environmental Protection Act* and the *Water Resources Act*. The Department of Justice and Public Safety also administers select enforcement activities under the *Wild Life Act*, the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*, and the *Endangered Species Act*. In addition, the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency administers select monitoring and wild life removal activities under the *Wild Life Act.*

Departmental Overview

Location of Offices

The Department's headquarters are in Corner Brook (Natural Heritage), and Confederation Building (Environment) in St. John's. The Department has additional offices in Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Stephenville, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and St. John's. The Department is also responsible for Salmonier Nature Park and several other provincial parks and reserves located throughout the province. The Institute for Biodiversity, Ecosystem Science and Sustainability (IBES) is located in Corner Brook with the Wildlife Division. The Department of Environment and Conservation website can be viewed by visiting: www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/

2014-15 Budget

The Department's gross expenditure budget for 2014-15 was $32,047,100 with planned related revenue of approximately $3,317,000 for a net expenditure of $28,730,100. Please refer to Appendix B for a summary of expenditures and related revenue.

Staffing

On March 31, 2015, the Department's staff complement consisted of 257 employees, which includes permanent (141), temporary (16), seasonal (94) and contractual (6) employees. Sixty-one per cent (158) of employees are male and 39 per cent (99) are female. Staff by region is indicated as follows:

Region	Staff
Avalon Peninsula	124
Central West	11
Central East	18
Labrador	8
West Coast/Northern Peninsula	96
Total Employees	**257**

Highlights and Accomplishments

Green Fund

The Newfoundland and Labrador Green Fund was a multi-year fund created using a combination of federal and provincial funds ($23 million federal and $2 million provincial) to support projects aimed at reducing GHG emissions. Initially launched in 2007, implementation of the Green Fund continued throughout 2014-15. A total of six projects were approved for funding totaling $752,882. In January 2015, ENVC engaged with an external evaluator to conduct a Summative Evaluation of the Green Fund. Interim data and findings highlighted in the Summative Evaluation indicate the following:

- A survey conducted by the NL Stats Agency indicated that 74.4 per cent of survey respondents were successful in receiving funding from the program.
- 87.2 per cent of all respondents indicated they would recommend the NL Green Fund to other groups.
- 72.4 per cent indicated that their project would not have gone ahead if they were unable to secure a Green Fund grant.

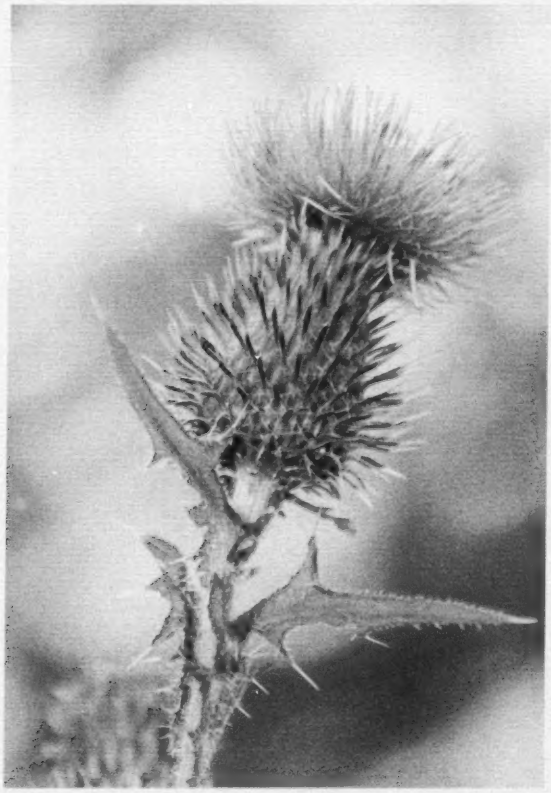
As an example in 2014-15 the Provincial Government provided funding in the amount of $52,000 to Green Rock EVS to aid with the supply and installation of five residential and 14 commercial electric vehicle charging stations in Newfoundland and Labrador. Green Rock EVS provides increased opportunities for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to go electric and make an environmental impact while saving time and money. There are currently 18 electric vehicles and 50 electric vehicle stations in the province.

Effective March 31, 2015, the Green Fund concluded and all funds disbursed.

Highlights and Accomplishments

Environmental Assessment

In 2014-15 the Environmental Assessment Division conducted approximately 50 screening reviews on projects submitted for environmental assessment. While the majority of projects were released subject to terms and conditions to further enhance environmental protection, seven projects required further assessment through the submission of Environmental Preview Reports (EPR). These projects are the Indian River Cottage Lot Development, Long Pond Weir, Fermeuse Marine Offshore Supply Base, Southern Labrador Waste Disposal Facility, Colinet River Zip Line and Adventure Park, Howse Property Direct Shipping Ore Mine and the Whitbourne Waste Recovery Facility (withdrawn). One project, the Lower Cove Mine Lease Expansion, required an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and was later withdrawn by the proponent. Other notable EA tasks included the issuance of EIS guidelines and the subsequent submission of the EIS and amendment for the Wabush 3 Open Pit Mine, the issuance of EPR guidelines for the Southern Labrador Waste Disposal Facility, Colinet River Zip Line and Adventure Park and the Howse Property Direct Shipping Ore Mine. Several major projects were also released from environmental assessment including Holyrood Combustion Turbine and NL Transshipment Hebron Expansion Project as well as various industrial, infrastructure and recreational projects.



Highlights and Accomplishments

The Jordan Water Project

The project entitled *"Transboundary Water Governance and Climate Change in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan;"* funded by NATO's Science for Peace and Security Program continued into 2014-15. The Department of Environment and Conservation's staff, in collaboration with the Kingdom of Jordan, continued work on the advanced water monitoring and reporting network which includes real-time water and weather data collection stations. The data from this weather and water monitoring network will be available for use by various agencies to monitor water and climate changes on a real-time basis for strategic water bodies in the Kingdom of Jordan, namely the Jordan River and the Dead Sea.

Throughout 2014-15 additional project milestones were achieved. In May 2014, a group of young scientists from the Kingdom of Jordan attended an in-depth training workshop in Edmonton, Alberta lead by staff from the Department and technical experts from Campbell Scientific Canada Corp. In January 2015, a team of experts from the Department travelled to the Kingdom of Jordan for a second time to provide training, set-up the remaining portion of the water resources monitoring network, and strengthen scientific collaboration. Work under this innovative project will conclude in Fall 2015 with extensive knowledge and expertise of water resources management being shared between the province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Data analysis and reporting as well as the development of additional water resources management tools will be the main focus of the remaining project. The project has been mutually beneficial in knowledge and expertise sharing for both the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and Jordan.

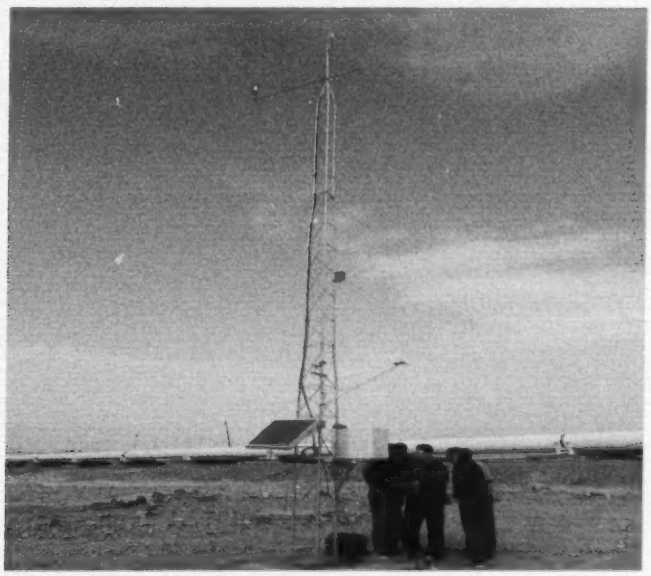
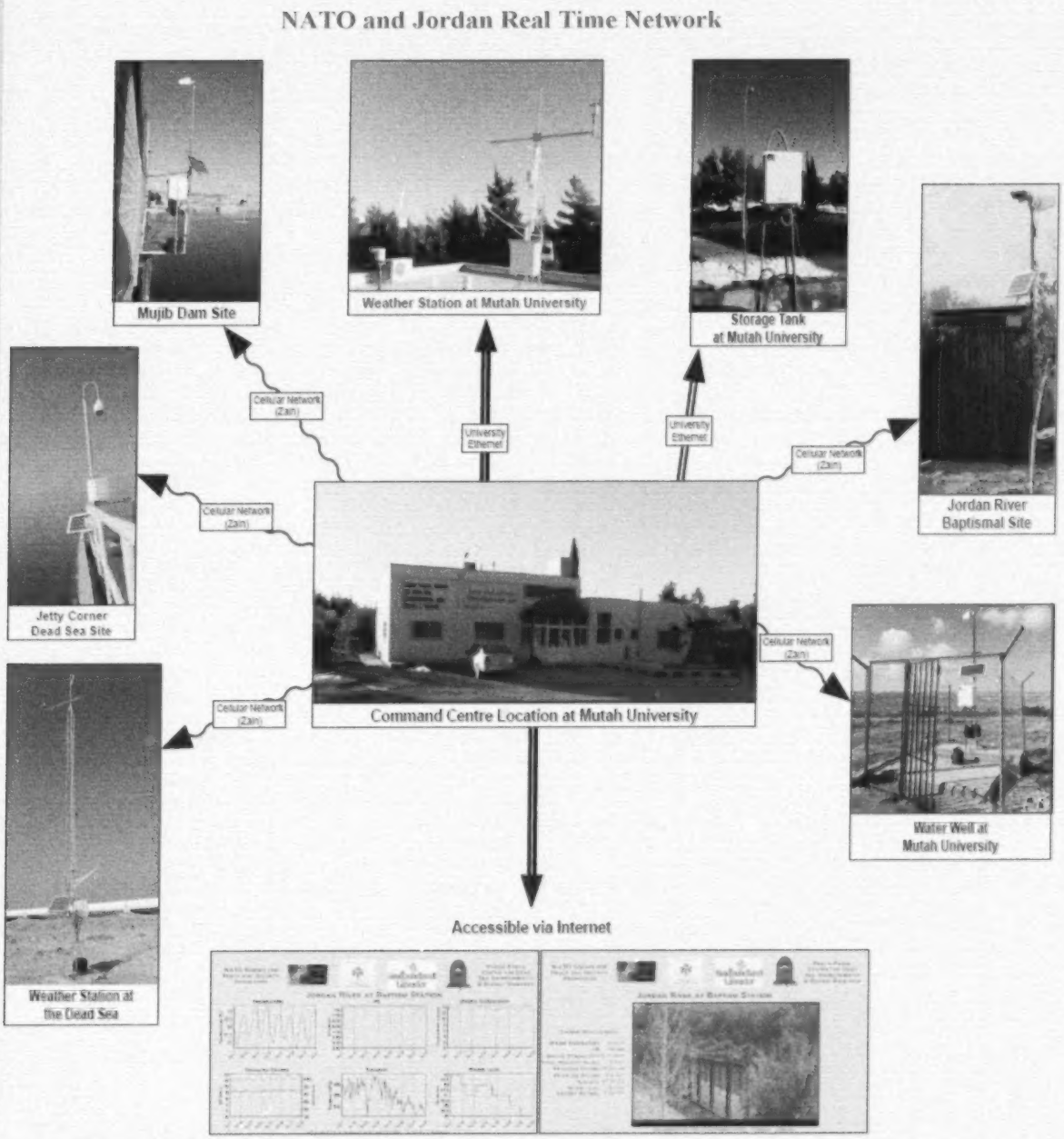


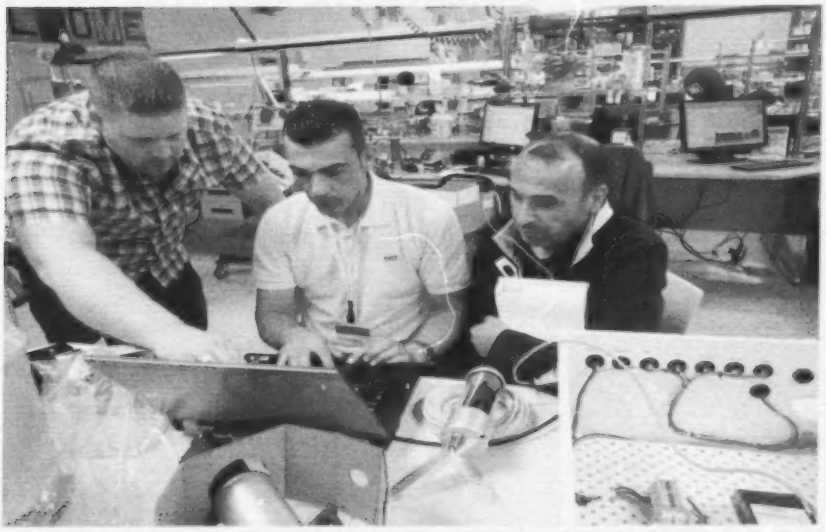
Photo: Installation of weather station at the Dead Sea in Jordan by Jordanian members of the project team and NL Water Resources Management staff – January 2015

Highlights and Accomplishments


NATO and Jordan Real Time Network
Mujib Dam Site
Weather Station at Mutah University
Storage Tank at Mutah University
Jordan River Baptismal Site
Jetty Corner Dead Sea Site
Cellular Network (Zain)
University Ethernet
Command Centre Location at Mutah University
Water Well at Mutah University
Weather Station at the Dead Sea
Accessible via Internet

Highlights and Accomplishments

Members of the Jordanian delegation and Canadian delegation at the Dead Sea – January 2015



Jordanian delegation receiving hands-on training in Edmonton, Alberta – May 2014

Highlights and Accomplishments

Pollution Prevention—Impacted Sites

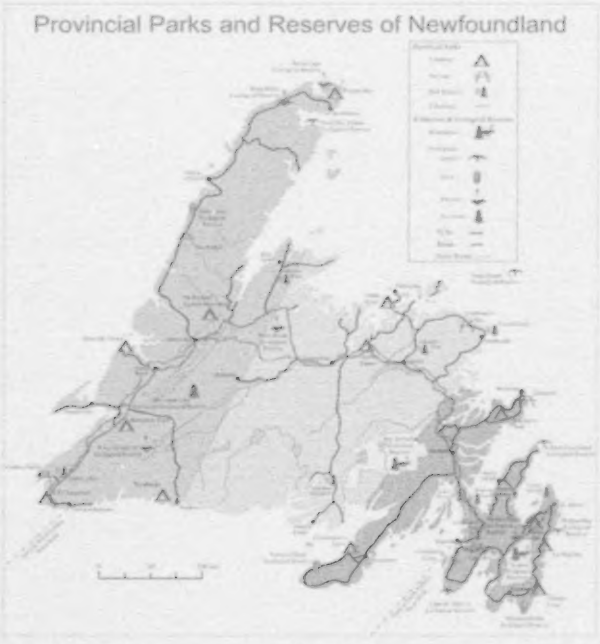
Throughout the 2014-15 reporting period, the Department made significant progress in regards to assessment, remediation and monitoring of impacted sites province wide. Budget 2014 provided funding to support the design of a program to properly record government liabilities for impacted sites. Budget 2014 also secured an additional $6 million over three years for the second phase of site remediation at the former military site in Hopedale. In Hopedale, ENVC oversaw contractual work that led to completion of year one of a new three year contract for the cleanup of the former military radar site. During this initial year, PCB and petroleum hydrocarbon contaminated areas adjacent to the town were remediated at a cost of just under $2.7 million. Remaining areas will be remediated over the next two years under guidance from the Pollution Prevention Division.

Safe Potable Drinking Water

In 2014-15, the Provincial Government invested over $6.3 million in drinking water quality-related projects including new facilities and upgrading of water treatment infrastructure and feasibility studies. The work of drinking water system municipal operators was recognized by the Department of Environment and Conservation at its annual Clean and Safe Drinking Water Workshop. The Operator of the Year Awards are presented annually to one operator and one volunteer operator for their professionalism, dedication and outstanding contribution to providing clean and safe drinking water in their town or community. The 2015 award recipients were: Marvin Bull, Town of Eastport; and Victor Keats, Local Service District of Phillips Head. The workshop, which saw more than 300 participants, provide municipal operators with an opportunity to come together and increase their knowledge of drinking water safety. Operator training and education opportunities have been delivered by the Department of Environment and Conservation through the Operator Education, Training and Certification (OETC) Program since 2001.

Highlights and Accomplishments

Campsite Reservation System



The Campsite Reservation Service (CRS) was first launched in 2007. In 2014, over 13,000 reservations were made with over 183,500 campers visiting the provincial camping parks. Approximately 86 per cent of campers were NL residents. In August, a request for proposals (RFP) for a new CRS was issued in collaboration with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO). The purpose of the RFP and a new CRS was to improve customer service and decrease the incidence of no-shows. The new system was informed by the 2014 park user client survey in which respondents indicated that they were willing to pay 100 per cent of their camping fees at the time of reservation and also supported the implementation of a cancellation policy for campsite reservations. A new CRS contract was awarded in December to Camis Inc. who currently manages campsite reservations services for Parks Canada and a number of other provincial jurisdictions. The reservation service operates on the principle of user pay that requires clients to pay 100 per cent of their campsite fees upfront, at the time of reservation. The service was launched in 2015 in time for the camping season.

Notre Dame Provincial Park

Highlights and Accomplishments

Labrador Caribou Initiative Year 3 Summary Report

In 2010 a population census survey of the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH) confirmed a steep and continuing decline of the herd. The three year, $1.9 million Labrador Caribou Initiative (LCI) began in recognition that an intensified and expanded level of research and monitoring was required in order to gain a better understanding of the underlying causes of the decline and to support the identification and implementation of effective management decisions. There was also recognition of the need to conduct an assessment of a series of graduated harvest restrictions.

The primary component of the LCI has been the collaring of the GRCH to track movements and determine population trend and vital rates, including; survivorship, recruitment and population demographic structure. Additional program components include focus on caribou health and disease, pregnancy rates, range use and the initiation of predation studies. A summary report of the LCI (Phase I) was prepared in 2014-15. This summary details all LCI research and monitoring activities and summarizes the results, findings and analyses of the data collected. The report also addresses a number of key questions relating to the decline of the GRCH and applies research findings to important management decisions. It includes annual budget summaries and a comprehensive chronology of all public and stakeholder consultations and outreach initiatives conducted by the Provincial Government with respect to the GRCH. This document is a testament to the extensive funding, collaborative partnerships, and efforts of the Wildlife Division to effectively manage the herd for generations to come.

Throughout 2014-15, these activities and results were communicated to the public, stakeholder groups, and Aboriginal governments through a series of meetings, information sharing sessions, stewardship initiatives and news releases. In addition, in 2014-15 specific preparations were undertaken to consult with Aboriginal groups, provide an update on the herd's current health and status and to invite comment on the potential continuation of the hunting closure.

Shared Commitments

Moose Management

Moose are important to our province, both culturally and economically. Recent concerns for moose-vehicle collisions have led to considerations for different moose management strategies. While citizens of the province are encouraged to be mindful and observant of moose when traveling on Newfoundland and Labrador's highways, the Department works collaboratively with the Department of Transportation and Works and other government entities on a series of initiatives to address moose-vehicle collisions, improve the collection of collision data and better understand the behavior of moose along our highways.

Building on the findings of previous consultations, work was conducted throughout 2014-15 to support and inform the development of a 5-year Moose Management Plan. Currently, the Department of Environment and Conservation works with the Departments of Natural Resources, Forestry and Agrifoods Agency, Justice and Public Safety, Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development, and Transportation and Works in an Interdepartmental Working Group. Through its membership, the working group is charged with coordinating a response to moose conflict reports, enforcement of wildlife laws and regulations related to moose; distribution of moose hunting licenses; and moose vehicle collisions on our province's roadways. Details on the Department's progress towards implementation of a five year moose management plan are contained in the Report on Performance Section of this report (page 21).

To view the 2015-2020 Moose Management Plan, please visit: www.env.gov.nl.ca/

Shared Commitments

Photo credit: Erika Pittman

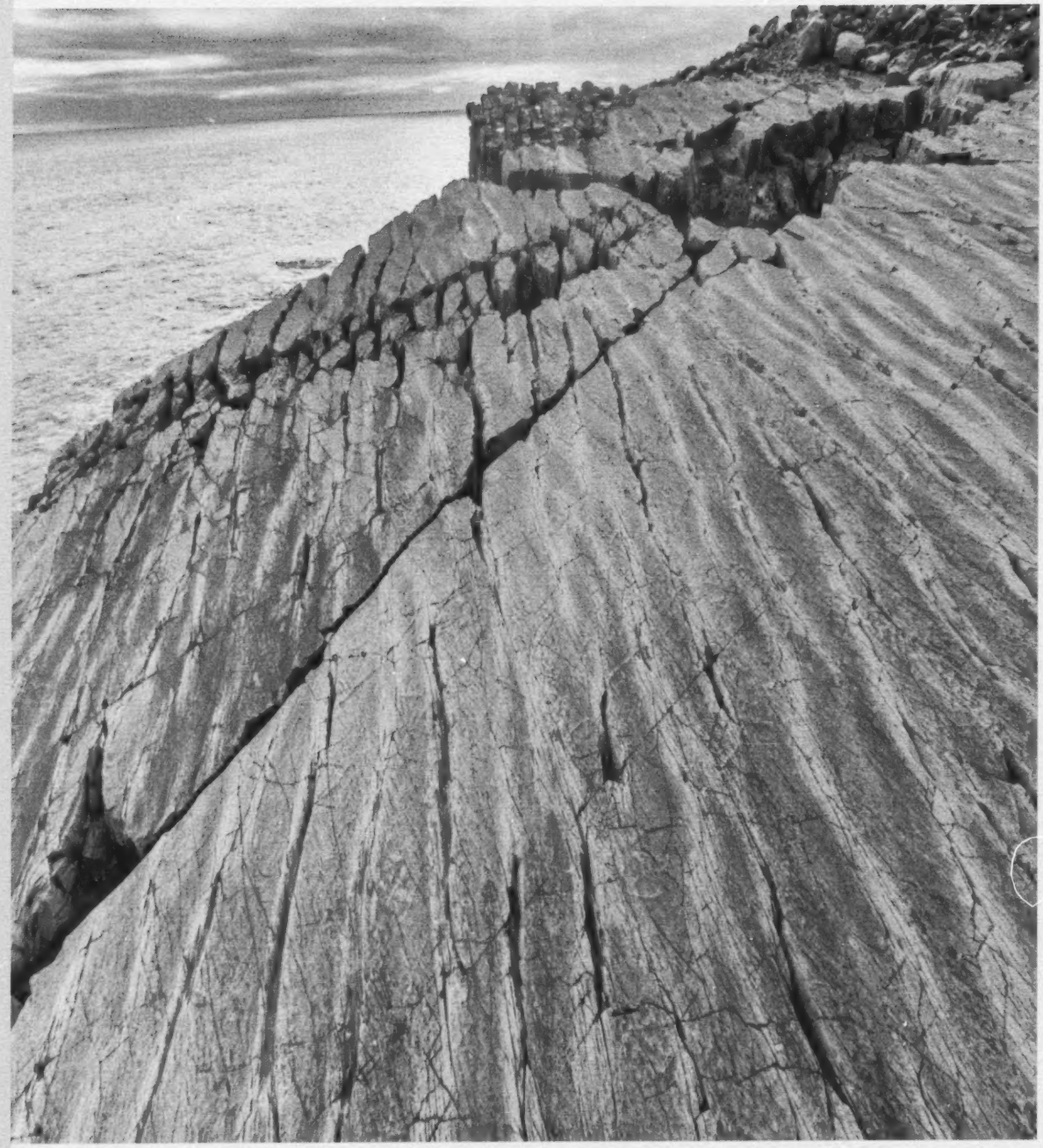
Mistaken Point

Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve is located southeast of Portugal Cove South on the southern tip of the Avalon Peninsula. The exquisitely preserved fossils found at the site are dated between 580 and 560 million years old, making them the oldest-known, large complex life forms found on earth and a critical milestone in the history of life on the planet. The Department of Environment and Conservation applied for designation of Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site nomination process. Throughout 2014-15, the Department worked in collaboration with the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development (BTCRD) and local residents on the preparation of the nomination for this globally significant fossil site. This nomination application is the culmination of remarkable work conducted over several years by staff and volunteers.

The Provincial Government has been working with Mistaken Point Ambassadors Inc. (MPAI) to support the development of the nomination dossier for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List. To support the development of the nomination dossier, the Provincial Government provided $431,527 to MPAI under the Regional Development Program through the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development, along with an additional investment of $209,000 through the Department of Environment and Conservation. The application was submitted to the World Heritage Centre in January, 2015 in Paris, France.

The nomination package will now be reviewed by a series of experts of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and a site visit will be conducted in 2015. A site evaluation team will report back to the World Heritage Committee and a final decision is anticipated by July, 2016.

Mistaken Point



(Photo credit: Erika Pittman)

Shared Commitments

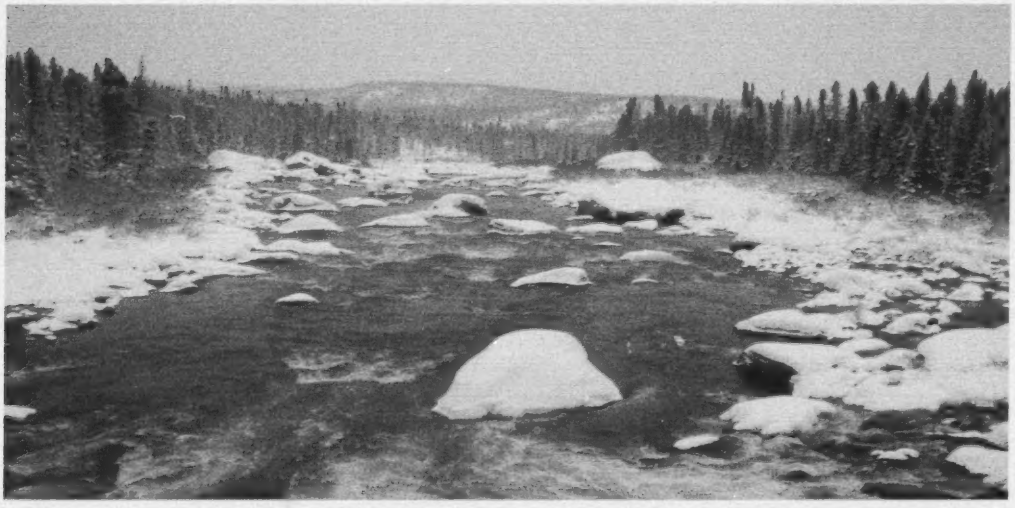
Climate Change Adaptation

The Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (CCEE) was created in 2009 and is responsible for strategy and policy development on climate change and energy efficiency. The Department works collaboratively with CCEE to achieve this mandate and implement action on climate change as put forward in the 2011 Climate Change Action Plan, *'Charting Our Course'*. The Department also leads collaborative efforts in climate change adaptation such as the work of the Atlantic Regional Adaptation Collaborative; and Atlantic Climate Adaptation Solutions Association (ACASA).

Environmental Protection Activities

To support the fulfillment of government's waste management strategic direction, the Department works with Government Service Centres, the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and the Multi-Materials Stewardship Board (MMSB) to administer the province's Solid Waste Management Strategy. The Department of Environment and Conservation and Service NL have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to administer environmental protection activities through Government Service Centres. This work includes inspection of waste disposal sites, petroleum storage tank systems, dry cleaners, saw mills, quarries, used tire facilities, used oil facilities, storage facilities for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), farm waste management facilities, soil treatment facilities and illegal dumping.

The Department also works with Government Service Centres and the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency to issue approvals and enforce conditions in the approvals related to waste management issues on farms. Environmental health services are provided under an MOU with Service NL relating to agricultural operations.



Shared Committments

Species at Risk

Throughout 2014-15, the Species Status Advisory Committee (SSAC) completed assessments to recommend that two bird species and six plant species be designated as either: Endangered, Threatened or Vulnerable under the *Endangered Species Act.* In addition, one lichen was recommended based on an assessment by the national Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). The provincial SSAC is made up of species experts and those with local or traditional knowledge. COSEWIC comprises of species experts, traditional knowledge experts and federal, provincial and territorial government representations. The SSAC works closely with the Department of Environment and Conservation to develop reports and advance listing recommendations to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council through the Minister of Environment and Conservation.

In 2014-15, the Department added three species at risk to the *Endangered Species Act* and removed one. Added to the list were the threatened Newfoundland Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus minimus*), and Sharpleaf Aster (*Oclemena acuminata*) and the vulnerable Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*). The SSAC reassessed the status of Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus*) across the province and determined the species as a whole was not at risk. During this assessment the committee looked at the subspecies *C. m. minimus* which occurs primarily on the island of Newfoundland and was concerned that the continuing declines of the species on the island could lead to its extirpation and recommended the status of threatened to the subspecies.

At the end of the fiscal year, the total number of species, subspecies and populations listed under the province's *Endangered Species Act* was 46 including: 21 endangered, 12 threatened and 13 vulnerable species. The Department continues to review the species that have been recommended for listing by the SSAC and the COSEWIC and will forward them for consideration by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

Photo credit: Ken Knowles

Shared Commitments

Safe Drinking Water

In 2001, as part of the Multi-Barrier Strategic Action Plan for Drinking Water safety, a Steering Committee consisting of the Deputy Ministers of Environment and Conservation, Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs, Health and Community Services and Service NL was appointed to oversee the implementation of the drinking water plan. As the lead agency for the implementation of the drinking water safety plan, the Steering Committee is chaired by the Deputy Minister of ENVC. The committee meets on regular basis to review the plan's progress implementation of the drinking water safety plan and other issues relating to drinking water safety.

The committee oversees the preparation and approves the release of the annual drinking water safety report which outlines progress for the reporting period and path forward for the next year. The Steering Committee is supported by an interdepartmental safe drinking water technical working group (SDW-TWG). The group is chaired by the Director of the Water Resources Management Division and includes technical representatives of Health and Community Services (Director of Community Health), Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs (Director of Municipal Infrastructure), Service NL (Director of Regional Services and Manager of Environmental Health), Director of Public Health Lab and Chief Medical Officer of Health. The technical working group reports to the Steering Committee. The latest annual report can be viewed at:
http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/waterres/reports/drinking_water/annual_report_2014.pdf

During 2014-15, the Department in collaboration with the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs, identified two new initiatives for addressing drinking water quality issues faced by small and rural communities in Newfoundland. The first initiative relates to a reduction in the total number of boil water advisories through the development of standard operating procedures (SOP) for boil water advisories.

The second initiative relates to an approach for sharing operators for water treatment systems on a regional basis, covering a cluster of 4-5 communities with historic water quality, operation and maintenance issues. It is expected that these initiatives will build capacity in small and rural NL communities and contribute to improvement in the operation and maintenance of water supply systems. Similar to other water system operators, ENVC will provide required training to Regional Operators and will act as a technical resource.

Shared Commitments

Natural Areas Establishment and the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council (WERAC)

The Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council is mandated by the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act* for the purpose of advising the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, through the Minister of Environment and Conservation, on matters relating to the establishment, management and termination of wilderness and ecological reserves. The 11 members of the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council were appointed by the Minister of Environment and Conservation for a three-year term on May 1, 2014. The newly appointed Council held its first meeting in February during which it was welcomed by the Minister. As one of its first actions, the Council established a Labrador sub-committee, headed up by well-known Labrador resident Joe Goudie from Mud Lake, to bring more attention to wilderness conservation in Labrador. During 2014/15, with support from WERAC, ENVC continued its work to finalize the designation of Lawn Bay as an Ecological Reserve.

Report on Performance

The Department of Environment and Conservation's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan identified two strategic issues that would guide the Department's work for the three-year period from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017. These strategic issues are environmental protection and natural heritage.

Issue One: Natural Heritage

The natural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador is of great importance to the people of the province and its conservation is an essential component of the Department of Environment and Conservation's mandate. Our natural heritage represents the province's wildlife, plants, ecosystems and landscapes. The mandate of Natural Heritage includes the protection of large wilderness areas, representative areas of all provincial eco-regions, and areas that contain rare natural phenomena in order to conserve the diversity and distinctiveness of the province's rich natural heritage and to support an ecologically sustainable future for the benefit of present and future generations.

Effective wildlife management is based in large part on research and monitoring. By studying wildlife interactions, distributions, populations and habitat use, biologists are able to make informed recommendations for wildlife management approaches. An essential component of effective wildlife management is monitoring populations after a strategy has been implemented. This allows managers to measure the impact of the management strategy in order to determine whether the desired outcome was reached. Many research projects include a field component designed to collect data on specific wildlife species populations and results are used by managers to make recommendations within the Wildlife Division, as well as to other provincial and federal government agencies. Departmental research into wildlife populations involves collaring and monitoring caribou for the caribou strategy, but also involves research related to other big game such as moose and black bear, small game such as snowshoe hare, furbearers and fish species, and the interactions between these species and their habitats. Combined this supports Government's strategic direction of Environmental Sustainability: Enhanced management of our Province's natural environment and this will address the focus areas of: parks and natural areas, and wildlife management.

Report on Performance

Goal: By March 31, 2017 the Department of Environment and Conservation will have enhanced management of natural heritage in Newfoundland and Labrador

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015 the Department of Environment and Conservation will have commenced implementation of improvements to enhance the protection of the province's natural heritage.

Measure: Commenced implementation of improvements to the protection of the province's natural heritage

Indicators	Results
Reported publicly on the status of the George River caribou herd to Aboriginal groups and stakeholders	In August, 2014 the Department of Environment and Conservation publically reported on the status of the George River Caribou Herd (GRCH). The status of the herd was communicated in a news release to the public. In addition, Budget 2014 provided $975,000 over three years to fund a scientific monitoring and research program for the GRCH. Investigations continue to focus on causes of high adult mortalities and the low number of caribou surviving beyond six months of age. Both NL and Quebec have initiated discussions on the development of a joint management plan in collaboration with the Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Round Table whose membership includes Aboriginal governments and organizations from both the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Province of Quebec.
Released conclusions of the Newfoundland Caribou Strategy initiative and responded to recommendations	In February 2008 $15.3 million was allocated over 5 years to support the Newfoundland Caribou Strategy in an effort to determine the nature of the Newfoundland island caribou decline and to develop a framework for sustainable management. Over the course of the strategy a series of research and data collection efforts each with their own findings have informed existing management practices. However, the Department was unable to release the final report during 2014-2015. A status report compiling the themes and conclusions stemming from the research is currently under review and is expected to be publicly released in the Fall 2015. Once released, government will respond and provide guidance on next steps.

Report on Performance

Indicators	Results
Implemented a Five-Year Moose Management Plan	Throughout 2014-15 work was undertaken to finalize the 2015-2020 Five Year Moose Management Plan. Many of the components of the plan including collaborative approaches and regional considerations were in part adopted and implemented throughout 2014 -2015 prior to the official release of the summative plan. The finalized plan was not made public in 2014-15; however an official announcement and public release is anticipated for April, 2015. In particular, research, data collection and analysis and dialogue with key stakeholders was conducted throughout fiscal 2014-15. The plan includes a strategic five year $1.8 million investment and the creation of an Interdepartmental Working Group to guide the implementation of the plan. The moose management plan is a joint initiative between the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Department of Transportation and Works. This collaborative approach is evidenced by the development and subsequent actions associated with the plan, in particular with reference to government's regional response to moose-vehicle collisions and key moose management areas that border the Trans Canada Highway.
Advanced the development of a UNESCO World Heritage Site nomination package for Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve	2014-15 represented a major milestone in the development of the Mistaken Point UNESCO World Heritage Site nomination package. Throughout the year considerable work was conducted by government and community partners such as the Mistaken Point Ambassadors Incorporated (MPAI) to support the development of the official nomination package. In January, 2015 the nomination dossier was formally submitted to the World Heritage Center. It is anticipated that a site visit by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) will occur in September, 2015. A final inscription decision is expected in July, 2016.
Continued to pursue policy options related to wetlands	Throughout 2014-15 the Department continued to pursue policy options related to wetlands. In February 2015, ENVC partnered with the Policy Innovation and Accountability Office and Memorial University (Grenfell campus) in an Environmental Policy Case Competition. Graduate level students were engaged in the research and presentation of policy options on environmental topics of interest within the Department. One team developed a wetlands policy paper for consideration by the Department. The presentation and associated jurisdictional scan and wetland policy options are currently under review. In addition, during 2014-15 the Minister of Environment and Conservation has also received presentations from key non-profit organizations such as Ducks Unlimited on possible approaches to wetland policies. Information and perspectives gathered from these and other sources will be used to inform the Department's consideration of policy options related to wetlands.

Report on Performance

Discussion of Results

Natural Heritage

The Department was successful in implementing improvements to the protection of the province's natural heritage through its continued stewardship of our province's wildlife and ecological sites. Specifically, in 2014-15 the department announced three-year funding for Phase II of the Labrador Caribou Initiative in the amount of $975,000. This funding supported the delivery of enhanced research and monitoring of the George River caribou herd (GRCH) to help inform management decisions; including those related to the assessment and review of the hunting ban. The July 2014 population census confirmed the continued decline of the GRCH that included low calf recruitment, low adult survival and a low percentage in the population of large adult males. On April 6, 2015 the department announced a new five-year moose management plan with funding of $1.8 million over the period 2015 - 2020. Many of the components of the plan including collaborative approaches and regional considerations were in part adopted and implemented throughout 2014 -2015 prior to the official release of the summative plan. The plan will see greater collaboration between government departments and will draw upon scientific research and moose-vehicle collision statistics to create a long-term, coordinated approach to moose management in the province. Work continued on the development of a wetland policy with the collaborative engagement of both government and non-government partners. Due to the timing and complex nature of the Newfoundland caribou research some delays were encountered in releasing the status report by March 31, 2015.

In January 2015, the department completed the World Heritage Site nomination dossier for Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve and submitted it to the World Heritage Center in Paris. This significant milestone was completed in collaboration with our community based partners and support from other provincial government departments. In 2015-16, the Department will continue with these efforts and commence monitoring to track our progress.

2015-16 Objective

By March 31, 2016, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have commenced monitoring to track progress towards stewardship of Newfoundland and Labrador's natural heritage.

Measure

Commenced monitoring to track progress towards stewardship of Newfoundland and Labrador's natural heritage.

Indicators

- Completed annual surveys of big and small game populations.
- Continued implementation and monitoring efforts to support the Moose Management Plan
- Continued to work with external stakeholders to advance and manage wetland stewardship agreements, wilderness and ecological reserves as well as species at risk
- Advanced the Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve World Heritage Site nomination dossier with the completion of the IUCN field mission and the provision of information to the World Heritage Centre
- Completed the transfer of the administration and control of provincial Crown land to Canada for the purpose of establishing the Mealy Mountains National Park Reserve.

Report on Performance

Issue 2: Environmental Protection

The Department of Environment and Conservation has the responsibility to protect and mitigate human impacts upon the environment of the province. The Department strives to achieve this by leading key initiatives and strategic approaches to preserve, protect and improve the quality of land, air and water in the province both now and into the future. The Department provides environmental stewardship for the province in the way it initiates changes to current regimes and practices, through adoption of the latest scientific, evidence-based approaches to managing the land, air and water. At the same time, the department continues to do the work it had previously undertaken, ensuring continuity in its management role in accordance with Government's Strategic Direction of Environmental Sustainability and will address the focus areas of: water and air quality, and remediation of impacted sites.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have enhanced efforts to improve environmental stewardship and environmental sustainability.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2015, the Department of Environment and Conservation will have implemented approaches to enhance management and assessment of impacted sites and air quality.

Measure: Enhanced assessment of impacted sites and air quality.

Report on Performance

Indicator	Results
Assessed ways in which the Department can support impacted site remediation	ENVC has assessed a variety of ways that the Department can support impacted sites remediation. Using direct management, funding and resource allocation and advisory services, the Department has effectively assessed and identified ways that it can support site remediation. For example, the Department continues to remediate impacted sites through the direct funding and management of the ongoing Hopedale Remediation Project as well as continued monitoring at completed remediation projects within the Town of Buchans, the Come By Chance secure landfill, and the New Harbour Barrens Waste Disposal Site. In 2014– 2015 Aivek Stantec was awarded a three-year $600,000 contract to provide engineering and onsite supervision for the Hopedale Remediation Project. Sanexan Environmental Services was awarded a 3-year $4.9 million contract to complete the remediation, transportation, and disposal of PCB, petroleum hydrocarbon, and heavy metal impacted soil in Hopedale. Year 1 of this 3 year program was completed in 2014-15. In addition to this direct management, ENVC also plays a key advisory role in the management of impacted sites for numerous other government departments. ENVC also leads the Impacted Sites Liability Assessment Program and evaluates sites across all government departments under one consistent approach with the goal of developing remedial estimates for each of the 177 impacted sites across government.
Implemented an impacted sites liability assessment program to allow for proper PS 3260 accounting standards for environmental liabilities	In 2014 - 2015, ENVC and the Office of the Comptroller General (OCG) implemented the Impacted Sites Liability Assessment Program (ISLAP). The ISLAP team with the help of all government departments and agencies compiled and reviewed 177 potentially impacted sites across the province. The information for each site was collected and evaluated based on the criteria set out under the PS3260 accounting standard to determine what sites were considered environmental liabilities. This accounting standard is a new mandatory liability standard specific to contaminated/impacted sites that the province is required to meet under the Public Sector Accounting Board starting with the 14-15 Public Accounts report. A standardized form was developed and completed for each site and efforts were made to estimate remediation costs where possible. The standardized collection and reporting of information is a critical component of the assessment process. This information will be used to allow each department to properly report its impacted sites and liabilities to the OCG. This information is to be compiled in the 2014—2015 Public Accounts Report to be released in the Fall of 2015. ENVC will continue to update ISLAP each year as new sites are recorded and environmental assessment and remediation work is completed on current sites.

Report on Performance

Indicator	Results
Installed an air quality monitoring station in Labrador.	In 2014-2015, Iron Ore Company of Canada's (IOC) air monitoring station located at Smokey Mountain was designated a joint industrial/ provincial site for reporting on air quality to the public. This is the only such government-industry partnership of this kind in Canada. In 2014, the Department provided IOC with an ozone monitor to supplement the monitoring equipment it already had at the site in order to determine an Air Quality Health Index (AQHI), which requires a particulate matter less than 2.5 monitor ($PM_{2.5}$), a nitrogen dioxide (NOx) monitor and an ozone monitor (O_3). The AQHI went live to the general public on July 22, 2014. AQHI hourly updates are available at http://www.ec.gc.ca/cas-aqhi/default.asp?lang=En&n=706F0693-1 and on The Weather Network.

Report on Performance

Discussion of Results

Environmental Protection

Throughout 2014-15, the Department was successful in implementing approaches to enhance management and assessment of impacted sites and air quality. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Impacted Sites Liability Assessment Program (ISLAP) has put in place a standardized, technically valid process that gives government a much better understanding of the costs to remediate sites for which government is responsible and allows for easy updating as new information becomes available. In addition, the Department continues to provide other government departments with technical advice in site remediation when requested. In 2014-15, the Department completed work on the first of three years remediation at Hopedale removing 1513.62 tonnes of PCB impacted material for treatment out of the province. This is the second three-year remediation program at Hopedale. The Department also continues to work with other jurisdictions in implementing the Air Quality Management System (AQMS). AQMS is a new process endorsed by governments, industries and environmental NGOs that will lead to improved air quality throughout Canada. In 2015-16, ENVC intends to build on this progress through further collaboration with governmental and external stakeholders.

2015-16 Objective: By March 31, 2016 the Department of Environment and Conservation will have continued to build upon its leadership efforts and collaboration in the areas of impacted sites and water quality.

Measure

Continued to build upon its leadership efforts and collaboration in the areas of impacted sites and water quality.

Indicators:

- Collaborated with the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs to develop Standard Operating Procedures to address long term boil water advisories
- Partnered with the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs to build capacity in selected Regional Service Boards and small communities for improved operation and maintenance of water supplies.
- Continued remediation of impacts at Hopedale and engaged in public meeting.
- Continued implementation of the ISLAP process and further formalized the Department's operational structure to address impacted sites
- Continued participation in Atlantic Partnership in Risk-Based Corrective Action Implementation (Atlantic PIRI).

Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities

The Department of Environment and Conservation continues to play a leadership role in environmental stewardship and striking a critical balance between economic and sustainable development. The Province continues to have tremendous opportunities for economic growth and development. With growth there is have an equally important opportunity to demonstrate leadership in regards to innovative policies and programs which exemplify environmental stewardship and responsibility for our province's land, air, and water resources.

The Department is committed to working with individuals, groups, communities and businesses that are dedicated to the protection of our natural areas and to the development of our resources in an environmentally sustainable manner. Partnerships with internal and external stakeholders have a capacity to mobilize and realize improvements in pollution prevention, water resource management, and protection of our parks and natural heritage. Success and prosperity rests in our ability to work together.

As a leader, it is critical that we exemplify our commitment and capacity to lead by example. Government wide initiatives such as the Greening Government Action Plan, and Green Procurement Initiative are important markers of the commitment to explore innovative and creative solutions, adopt best practices and set standards in relation to environmentally conscious policies, practices and procurement.

The Department has a strong tradition of communications with public stakeholders in particular as it relates to Environmental Assessment. With technological advances and changes in public expectations the Department has a unique opportunity to use social media tools to engage with citizens and stakeholders on the issues that matter. New approaches to engagement require the Department to balance its commitments to open government with responsibilities to safeguard proprietary business interests and ultimately our responsibilities to be effective environmental stewards.

Challenges

Environmental issues are by their very nature, challenging, in terms of their scale and interconnectedness. The Department recognizes that environmental issues are extremely complex and often transcend the province's jurisdiction. While these realities do represent challenges, the Department will actively work towards achieving our mission through initiatives that are within our sphere of control. This includes appropriate regulations and policies, scientific monitoring, and dialogue with invested stakeholders.

Communication, awareness building, and the resourcing of existing and emergent priority areas while balancing economic development and environmental sustainability will remain ongoing challenges for the Department. Similarly, articulating and demonstrating how the Department's policies and programs are essential components in our province's future prosperity and quality of life will remain an ongoing challenge.

As industrial projects are initiated and proceed through the various phases of development, it is critical that, as a government, we ensure that environmental safeguards and protections are in place. We will continue to work with our stakeholders to ensure their interests are considered and advanced while pursuing the strategic directions of government.

Appendix A - Lines of Business

The Department of Environment and Conservation provides the following lines of business:

Provincial parks, ecological and wilderness reserves, natural areas, and Canadian Heritage rivers

The Department is responsible for:

- the management and administration of provincial parks (the Newfoundland T'Railway Provincial Park is jointly managed by a special T'Railway Council) under the *Provincial Parks Act*;
- designation and management of wilderness and ecological reserves under the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*;
- development and implementation of biodiversity monitoring programs and maintenance of ecological integrity in protected areas;
- development and implementation of environmental education programs within select wilderness/ecological reserves;
- implementation of protection measures for Canadian Heritage Rivers in the province;
- negotiation of the land transfer to the federal government for National Parks; and,
- issuance of various permits for provincial parks, ecological and wilderness reserves.

Coordination of environmental assessments, sustainable development and supporting strategic environmental science

The Department coordinates the provincial environmental assessment process for new development, which includes:

- reviewing proposed undertakings;
- gathering background information concerning the environmental impacts of the proposals;
- analyzing information according to a well-defined set of environmental assessment procedures;
- providing recommendations to the minister as to whether a project can proceed in an environmentally-acceptable manner; and
- conducting select surveillance on projects released from the environmental assessment process

The Department is also responsible for:

- strategic research on wildlife species, notably the Newfoundland Caribou in support of the sustainable development initiative;
- development of public education and outreach information related to sustainable development; and;
- general promotion of sustainable development within Government and the larger community.

Management and protection of wildlife and inland fish populations

The Department protects, manages and conserves the province's biodiversity, wildlife resources and wildlife habitat. This includes:

- determining the status of species in the province according to the National Accord for the Conservation of Species at Risk to which the province is a signatory;
- developing and implementing stewardship agreements to support the recovery of species at risk;
- identifying, designating and developing recovery strategies for species at risk according to the *Endangered Species Act*;
- developing and implementing strategies for the conservation of biodiversity;
- designating and managing wildlife areas;
- administering the Salmonier Nature Park - a wildlife rehabilitation, interpretation and research facility;
- developing management plans for consumptive species which are then published in the annual hunting and trapping guide;
- issuing hunting and trapping licenses;
- developing policies and guidelines regarding wildlife utilization;
- issuing Newfoundland and Labrador Guide licenses;
- providing education, awareness and training programs such as firearm safety, hunter and trapper education courses;
- implementing the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, including providing assistance in the development of agreements to support wetland and coastal stewardship initiatives;
- developing long term landscape level planning to minimize conflicts between wildlife and other land uses;
- permitting for the non-consumptive use, possession, importation and export of wildlife and parts thereof;
- collecting scientific information to provide input into the sustainable management of wildlife, including inland fish populations, and habitat;
- utilizing education, awareness and stewardship programs and initiatives to foster appropriate attitudes, respect, behavior and appreciation towards our wildlife and habitat; and
- development and coordination of graduate research projects through the Institute of Biodiversity, Ecosystem Science (IBES).

Protection of air and soil

The Department is responsible for prevention of pollution of the province's air, water and soil ecosystems. Responsibilities include:

- preparing and issuing Certificates of Approval and licenses for:
    - industrial operations;
    - waste management systems (in collaboration with Service NL);
    - waste dangerous goods transporters;
    - pesticide vendors, operators and applicators; and
    - heating oil storage tank inspectors;
- developing policies, guidelines, protocols, and regulations;
- developing training material and providing training;
- enforcing Certificates of Approval, license conditions and legislation through:
    - inspections, other than those done by Service NL;
    - the development of environmental monitoring programs in collaboration with industry;
    - audits of the environmental monitoring programs;
    - audits of environmental laboratories, and,
    - the monitoring of criteria air contaminants;
- designating impacted sites and auditing risk assessments based on environmental site assessments;
- managing remediation of industrial and military impacted sites that are the responsibility of government; and,
- maintaining a registry of impacted sites.

Management of water resources, water quality, and availability

The Department ensures that the province's water resources are protected, conserved and enhanced to provide the greatest possible sustainable benefits to the province. Responsibilities include:

- designation of protected water supply areas and protected wellheads;
- monitoring and analysis of chemical water quality of community water supplies;
- issuance of well driller licenses;
- inspection of water well structures in accordance with requirements of the *Well Drilling Regulations*;
- comprehensive training for municipal water operators of community water and wastewater systems;
- hydrologic modeling;
- investigation of water-related problems and complaints;
- overseeing inspections of dams;
- granting of water rights;
- maintenance of a water rights registry;
- issuance of permits for community water and sewage systems, extensions and alterations;
- monitoring and inspection of community water and wastewater systems;
- provision of technical assistance on community water and sewage, hydrology, hydraulics, and environmental design of water related structures;
- maintenance of various online water quality and quantity databases and GIS resources;
- conducting studies on groundwater resources, flooding, water resource impacts and water use;
- flood risk mapping; and
- hurricane alerts

Climate Change Adaptation

The Department works in collaboration with the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency in responding to climate change. The Department is responsible for:

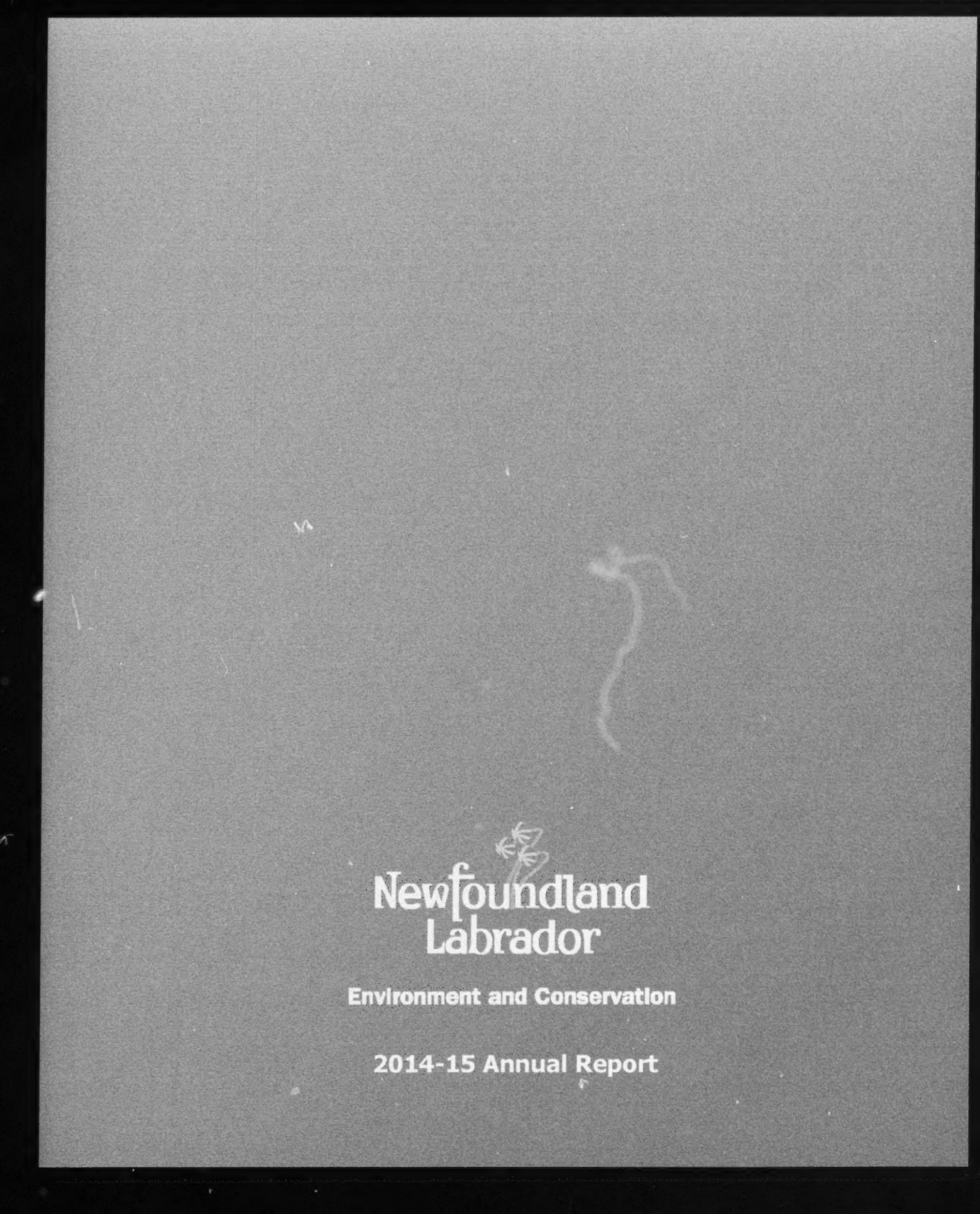
- implementation of some elements of the provincial Climate Change Action Plan; Atlantic Climate Adaptation Solutions (ACAS) Program;
- administration of the Newfoundland and Labrador Green Fund (expired March 31, 2015); and Administration of Regional Adaptation Collaboratives; and,
- creation of stakeholder awareness on greenhouse gas reduction strategies and climate change impacts and adaptation.

Appendix B - Financial Statements

Expenditure and Revenue figures included in this document are based on public information provided in the Report and the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended 31 March, 2015. It should be noted that these statements are unaudited.

		Estimates	
Executive and Support Services	Actual$	Amended$	Original$
Minister's Office	245,317	296,300	296,300
Executive Support	1,093,589	1,129,500	1,129,500
Revenue - Provincial	(136,540)	(164,000)	(164,000)
Administrative Support	763,025	811,300	811,300
Revenue - Provincial	(41,177)	0	0
Policy Development and Planning	1,726,878	2,292,800	2,299,800
Revenue - Federal	(8,858)	(71,000)	(71,000)
Sustainable Development and Strategic Science	478,055	669,300	741,300
Administrative Support - Capital	689,547	773,000	575,000
Total: Executive and Support Services	**4,809,836**	**5,737,200**	**5,618,200**
Environmental Management and Control			
Pollution Prevention	5,227,623	5,989,200	5,991,700
Revenue - Federal	(8,900)	(25,000)	(25,000)
Revenue - Provincial	(77,432)	(148,500)	(148,500)
Water Resources Management	3,640,119	4,296,500	4,296,500
Revenue - Federal	0	(330,000)	(330,000)
Revenue - Provincial	(792,702)	(774,800)	(774,800)
Water Quality Agreement	1,363,406	1,500,200	1,500,200
Revenue - Federal	(50,500)	(121,000)	(121,000)
Revenue - Provincial	(854,859)	(1,012,200)	(1,012,200)
Environmental Assessment	771,607	902,700	902,700
Revenue - Provincial	(41,286)	(302,000)	(302,000)
Total: Environment Management and Control	**9,177,076**	**9,975,100**	**9,977,600**

	Estimates		
	Actual$	Amended$	Original$
Wildlife, Parks and Natural Heritage			
Parks and Natural Areas	4,983,987	5,136,000	5,061,500
Revenue - Federal	0	(2,500)	(2,500)
Revenue - Provincial	(293)	(5,000)	(5,000)
Park Development	223,157	234,900	425,900
Total: Parks and Natural Areas	**5,206,851**	**5,363,400**	**5,479,900**
Wildlife			
Administration, Licensing and Operations	1,547,394	1,825,600	1,832,600
Endangered Species and Biodiversity	334,376	390,500	390,500
Stewardship and Education	1,136,635	1,243,000	1,223,000
Habitat, Game and Fur Management	1,630,660	2,026,400	2,039,400
Revenue - Provincial	(68,277)	(82,000)	(82,000)
Research	1,326,327	1,561,900	1,561,900
Cooperative Wildlife Projects	257,607	553,700	553,700
Revenue - Federal	(277,134)	(279,000)	(279,000)
Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Science	354,285	414,300	414,300
Total: Wildlife	**6,241,873**	**7,654,400**	**7,654,400**
Total: Wildlife Parks and Natural Heritage	**11,448,724**	**13,017,800**	**13,134,300**
TOTAL DEPARTMENT	**25,435,636**	**28,730,100**	**28,730,100**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